



7555-01-P

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request

**AGENCY:** National Science Foundation

**ACTION:** Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

**SUMMARY:** The National Science Foundation (NSF) has submitted the following information collection requirement to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13. This is the **second notice** for public comment; the first was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER at 80 FR 64024, and one comment was received. NSF is forwarding the proposed renewal submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance simultaneously with the publication of this second notice. The full submission may be found at: <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>. Comments regarding (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be

collected; or (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for National Science Foundation, 725 - 17<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W. Room 10235, Washington, D.C. 20503, and to Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1265, Arlington, Virginia 22230 or send email to [splimpto@nsf.gov](mailto:splimpto@nsf.gov). Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling 703-292-7556.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Suzanne H. Plimpton at (703) 292-7556 or send email to [splimpto@nsf.gov](mailto:splimpto@nsf.gov).

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339, which is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (including federal holidays).

NSF may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Comment:** On October 23, 2015, we published in the Federal Register (80 FR 64024) a 60-day notice of our intent to request renewal of this information collection authority from OMB. In that notice, we solicited public comments for 60 days ending December 21, 2015. One comment was received from the public notice from the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB). In their comment, FASEB provided support for the Biological Sciences Proposal Classification Forms, noting that they provide "additional means for maintaining a stringent merit review process and data-driven oversight of NSF's research portfolio."

**Response:** NSF thanks FASEB for its support of the Biological Classification forms and is proceeding with the clearance request.

**Title of Collection:** "Biological Sciences Proposal  
Classification Form"

**OMB Approval Number:** 3145-0203.

**Type of Request:** Intent to seek approval to renew an  
information collection for three years.

**Proposed Project:** Five organizational units within the  
Directorate of Biological Sciences of the National Science  
Foundation will use the Biological Sciences Proposal  
Classification Form. They are the Division of Biological  
Infrastructure (DBI), the Division of Environmental Biology  
(DEB), the Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences  
(MCB), the Division of Integrative Organismal Systems IOS)  
and Emerging Frontiers (EF). All scientists submitting  
proposals to these units will be asked to complete an  
electronic version of the Proposal Classification Form.  
The form consists of brief questions about the substance of  
the research and the investigator's previous federal  
support. Each division will have a slightly different  
version of the form. In this way, submitters will only  
confront response choices that are relevant to their  
discipline.

**Use of the Information:** The information gathered with  
the Biological Sciences Proposal Classification Form serves

two main purposes. The first is facilitation of the proposal review process. Since peer review is a key component of NSF's grant-making process, it is imperative that proposals are reviewed by scientists with appropriate expertise. The information collected with the Proposal Classification Form helps ensure that the proposals are evaluated by specialists who are well versed in appropriate subject matter. This helps maintain a fair and equitable review process.

The second use of the information is program evaluation. The Directorate is committed to investing in a range of substantive areas. With data from this collection, the Directorate can calculate submission rates and funding rates in specific areas of research. Similarly, the information can be used to identify emerging areas of research, evaluate changing infrastructure needs in the research community, and track the amount of international research. As the National Science Foundation is committed to funding cutting-edge science, these factors all have implications for program management.

The Directorate of Biological Sciences has a continuing commitment to monitor its information collection in order to preserve its applicability and necessity. Through periodic updates and revisions, the Directorate

ensures that only useful, non-redundant information is collected. These efforts will reduce excessive reporting burdens

**Burden on the Public:** The Directorate estimates that an average of five minutes is expended for each proposal submitted. An estimated 6,500 responses are expected during the course of one year for a total of 542 public burden hours annually.

**Expected Respondents:** Individuals

**Estimated Number of Responses:** 6,800

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** 6,800

**Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:** 567

hours

**Frequency of Responses:** On occasion

Dated: December 23, 2015.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,  
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National Science Foundation.

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